

# WILLAMETTE FARMER.

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SALEM, OREGON, FEBRUARY 24, 1872.

Volume IV.—Number 1.

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## CONVERSATIONS.

ED. FARMER: I suppose the farmers of this State ought to write for your paper, if they expect it to prosper and be a good one. The truth is, farmers, after the toils of the day, feel more like resting than writing. Everything being new in farming here, men must sometimes guess at facts, and experiment constantly.—Hence many do not wish to give their views publicly, without being reasonably certain of them. In a country like ours, that has two extremes of wet and dry, it requires some years of experience to establish anything like certain rules to work by. When the soil was new and rich, it did not seem to take much thought how to farm; but, as the fertile prairies have been used for years in constant cropping, men begin to see the necessity of more thorough farming. It would seem that draining of some kind must be resorted to, and subsoling follow.—The excessive rains warrant the first, and the extreme drouth the latter.

But perhaps there is more expected of the Oregon farmer than as yet ought to be. Every country, in some years, fails to a certain extent, it matters not how judicious the farming may be. In the season past the farmers produced wonderful crops of grain, but hay and vegetables were light. Some editors are always croaking about farmers' not having plenty of this or that; but the fact is, some things fail in spite of human effort. A certain editor in your town is constantly finding fault that more potatoes were not raised—that farmers ought to pay more attention to truck patches, etc. The fact is, last summer was very unpropitious for truck in general. The cabbage were mostly destroyed by cabbage lice, and potatoes failed for want of rain. I suppose the reason of this editor's talking so much about pota-

toes is that his rations of flour have been short since a certain member of Congress left Salem.

We must labor, and wait. Time alone brings all things even. To the man that toils faithfully, there is a living, and this is about all there is to get. Hope leads us on, and we think there is more—and well is it thus, to a certain extent—but let us learn to enjoy to-day. The sum of our happiness is what we enjoy each day. There is no elysium of sweet repose here, but the great law, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," stares us in the face ever.—Then let us meet it manfully, energetically, and our pathway shall be the brighter for it.

The last year was a prosperous one to farmers, but the coming one as yet looks hardly so much so. Grain is likely to be low, and, with it, everything else. But more labor and better preparation of the soil will tend much to help it out. Let us learn to *think and act* move, and to show off less. The great rage of the American people is to show off—to be somebody. This, simmered down to fact, means a walking sign-post for dress-goods. Men who really are something, and do something, dress very plainly, and mind their own business. T. L. D.

## LETTER FROM WALLA WALLA.

WALLA WALLA, Feb. 10, 1872.

ED. FARMER: As the winter is about past, and its lessons impressed upon our minds, and those lessons are fresh and vivid, it is well for us to make some notes for record, as a guide in the future.

Our cold weather commenced on the 23d of December, snow falling to the depth of three inches. The night of the 25th was cold, 10° below zero; but the following day was moderate, and since that time it has not been colder than 6° above—though nearly all the time called cold weather, the mercury was from 16 to 30 degrees above. On the 2d of January, at 6 a. m., the thermometer marked the lowest, 6° above; at 12 a. m. 20° above; and at 3 p. m. the Chinook wind arrived, and the thermometer rose to 42° in five minutes' time, and all our snow disappeared in twelve hours.

The snow fell between the 25th and 1st to about seven inches, which was the deepest snow we had. Owing to the lack of rain in early fall, our grass did not start afresh, as usual, and, as a consequence, stock was poor for this season of the year.—And, as is usually the case, stock was scattered, and the owners could not find all of them when the snow fell, and feed was necessary. The country was well supplied with feed, and the only stock lost by the severity of the winter were those not found by their owners, or a few of those very poor in the fall. Of those astray during the winter, all did very well, except such as came in from the range and hung around corns where other stock were being fed. Of such, of course, all perished, except they were taken in by the owners of the premises and fed as their own. These circumstances have developed the importance of a concert of action among farmers and stock-raisers in the course to be pur-

sued when stock comes around in time of a storm. As the custom is now, people are shy about feeding other persons' cattle, for fear that when spring comes the owners will not pay for the feed given them.—But it is only by a concert of action and the passage of some resolutions expressing the opinion of a large number of men in favor of taking in and feeding such stray stock, that much trouble and loss may be avoided in the future. This one fact of our stock being astray is the cause of more than nine-tenths of the loss this winter. One other cause of much loss arises from the "coming in" of cows during January and February; and as long as bulls are allowed to run at large from one year's end to another, this will be the case. We will not only have our calves come at a bad time, but we will have scrub calves, no matter how much we spend for fine stock bulls. This trouble will continue until our Legislature shall pass an act restraining bulls, the same as stallions, from running on the commons.

So much for our present lesson on stock. We will now go to the orchard and the vineyard, and see what the winter has done.

A dry fall, with light frosts in the latter part of September, gradually increasing during October and November, ripened the wood and placed the trees and vines into winter quarters in most splendid condition. An examination of the fruit buds of the apple, pear, plum, and cherry, reveals perfectly green and healthy interior. The peach, however, does not look exactly right. Slicing off the bud from tip to base, the interior looks brown, but, as you near the base of the bud, it looks green and natural. Now, whether the injury done to the petals of the blossom will extend to the pistil or embryo peach, remains to be seen. The young growth is perfectly sound, and as far as can be seen there is no injury to any variety of fruit except the peach. Grapes have stood the winter perfectly. No injury to any except where they were grown on wet land, or were irrigated. Some such vines are killed back to near the ground, except canes that were close to or on the ground, which are uninjured. So with the present condition of the fruit prospect. Should nothing further occur to injure it, we will have a good crop of fruit next season.

Grain will most likely yield a bountiful harvest, as large quantities were sown in the fall, which are uninjured, and the plow is now running, and if not impeded by cold weather (which is unlikely), there will be large crops of spring grain. The ground is thoroughly saturated with water, which is a good insurance against summer drouth.—Thus, all things considered, Walla Walla has fair prospects for the coming season. A. B. ROBERTS.

ARRESTED.—The sheriff of Walla Walla county, on a requisition from the Governor of Washington Territory, arrested a man named James Shafer in this city last week, on a charge of grand larceny committed some weeks ago in Walla Walla.

## REPLY TO MR. GEER.

ED. FARMER:—Permit me to say to Mr. Geer and the readers of the FARMER who have taken an interest in the article deprecating the spirit of a part of Mr. Geer's paper, headed "Blooded Cattle," that he is certainly mistaken when he assumes my object was to laud Mr. Reed and dishonor him. I have no reason for writing in the interest of Mr. Reed or any ring he may or may not belong to. I have no acquaintance with Mr. Reed. My only object was to claim a place for him amongst those men whom Mr. Geer enumerated (himself included) as having preceded Mr. Reed in the introduction of blooded cattle into Oregon. In claiming that Mr. Reed had seemingly exceeded any of his predecessors in the amount of his investment, I had no intention to claim honor for mere money in the matter; it is the spirit of the act and the probable effects upon the stock interests of the State that is entitled to public notice. It is evident my talk about wooden plows was "bosh" to Mr. Geer; and he assumes, for what reason I know not, that I would not buy an Oregon-made plow, but would favor imported implements of all kinds, even if here. I use a plow made by J. D. Bowen, of Roseburg, Oregon. It is the best plow I have tried for my land. It cut the same sized furrow with fifty pounds less draft power than any plow tested at the State Fair trials of 1868. It is made of steel, but (and here the bosh comes in again) it is not the best quality of steel, or the plow would be still better. The better the material our home industry has for its agencies of production, (cattle as well as steel,) the better that production will be; and that I suppose is bosh to Mr. Geer.

Mr. Geer asks what I would think of the business capacity of any man who would send all the way to Vermont and pay \$200 for a Merino buck, and pay freight on him from there here, when he could buy just as good or a better one of me for \$25? Well, I confess I cannot see how the man would be serving his own interests to the best advantage by such a course, but I should think he was serving mine pretty effectually, for I am quite sure that other parties who might want a Merino buck would likely inquire if they could not get as good an article from Oregon sheep-breeders, at a less price, and, as a consequence, the Oregon-raised sheep would find buyers at enhanced prices. That was really the result of the first introduction of the first Vermont Merino by Messrs. Jones & Rockwell into Oregon. For two years previous to that event, there had been a choice flock of Australian Merinos, owned by Coffin & Tompson, in Yamhill county, but no one paid much attention to them. As soon as Mr. Rockwell began to sell bucks here at \$500 each, the sheep of Messrs. Coffin & Tompson found buyers at the prices they asked, and very soon they raised on those prices.

That some such result should follow the importation of the high priced cattle which have drawn out Mr. Geer's pen, I have little doubt.

I know of one gentleman whose attention to stock improvement was apparently stimulated thereby to such an extent that he offered Mr. Reed \$100 (a very liberal price, I think) for the season of two cows, and as Mr. Reed refused the offer, I fancy some other Oregon breeder will be likely to find a customer. I have no doubt that Mr. Reed's importation will be a financial benefit to those Oregon breeders enumerated by Mr. Geer, who have clung to their stock and can show satisfactory evidence of careful breeding. That it has not always been profitable, I can well believe. Investments of this kind, like many others, pay best to those who can afford to wait longest. As it would seem from Mr. Geer's statement that thoroughbred Short Horns are cheaper in Oregon than in any other State, our home market will improve as population increases, and it is probable that some of our breeders will find a market for some of their surplus stock in the growing communities east and north of us.

What I wish most to see is every farm in Oregon stocked with the best stock of the different breeds of animals most suitable for each particular farm. We shall, in four years, have an opportunity to measure our different States, and then I hope Mr. Geer's opinion of our Merino sheep will be proved true, and that we will be able to show, on that glorious centennial celebration, that we are entitled to the same high rank for the superiority of our cattle and horses and grain and fruit products. J. M.

## CALIFORNIA.

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 17.—During the last twenty-four hours 4 6-100 inches of rain fell. Total for the season, 28 38-100.

There is now nine cases of small pox in the pest house and eight cases in town, some of the slight varioloid form.

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 20.—Four cases of small pox have appeared among recently arrived passengers by the steamer Constitution.

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 18.—The trial of Crenshaw for murder was concluded last night. The case is the first on the calendar of indictments growing out of the Chinese riot of October 24th. The jury were out twenty minutes, and returned a verdict of guilty of manslaughter. This trial may be regarded as a test case for all others, some twenty in number.

## DAMAGE TO RAILROAD BRIDGES.

In regard to the damage done by the flood to the railroad bridges the Bulletin has the following: "The bridge over the Willamette river at Harrisburg was not injured so severely as was at first supposed, and the damage will be repaired by five o'clock this evening. The Santiam bridge at Jefferson has suffered more severely than the Harrisburg bridge, although not so great as was first reported. The gravel has washed out of one of the piers, and the south bank of the river has been washed away to a considerable extent, but a large force of workmen are employed in making the necessary repairs, which will be completed by to-morrow evening. The trains in the meantime will not cross the bridge, but passengers will be transferred to another train at this point. The Superintendent is satisfied that trains could run over the bridge in perfect safety, but Mr. Thielsen, the Chief Engineer, deems it a matter of precaution not to do so for a couple of days, or until after he has fully completed the repairs."